

2005 Report of Accomplishments (July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005)

Grant Conservation District



Formerly known as Othello and Upper Grant Conservation District (merged as of 12/1/04)

Most Significant Natural Resource Accomplishment

- Through financial dollars from the Columbia Basin Ground Water Management Area (GWMA), Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) the Grant CD provided technical assistance for Irrigation Water Management (IWM). IWM is being applied to approximately 140,000 acres of commercial farming, in excess of 300,000 gallons of water saved per acre would equal approximately 50,000 acre feet of water across the District. IWM also saves approximately \$5.00 per acre in power cost or approximately \$500,000 in power savings. GWMA IWM has cost shared approximately \$354,638. IWM has reduced the aquifer contamination of drinking water in this area. Nitrate samples collected indicate a slow down in the number of wells exceeding drinking water standards. These slow downs suggest GWMA's community-based IWM program is having an effect and should continue into the foreseeable future. The power/water savings are being recorded by staff through PCC readings and by the individual farmers/consultants through moisture monitoring.



Mission of the Grant Conservation District

- The mission of GCD is to address local natural resource conservation issues by creating local working solutions through educating and serving GCD land occupiers in the voluntary implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP).
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Water Quality Implementation

- Provided Technical Assistance for IWM cost share program to over 380 producers.
 - Provided over 400 GIS maps on Ag landuse and aquifer information for producers, agencies, cities and counties.
 - Provided staff for County Crop ID Project for over 400 fields for GIS database.
 - Prepared a Conservation Farm Plan for water runoff for a local producer by the request of DOE and held an improvement tour.
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Basic Funding

- Provided services to local cooperators when other funding was not available.
 - Performed day to day activities and monthly meetings to help support the GCD Supervisors.
 - Staff and Supervisors worked together to merge the Othello CD and Upper Grant CD into the Grant CD as of 12/01/04. The purpose was to pull together and more effectively accomplish the resource concerns within the two districts and to seek future funding as one.
 - Provided staff assistance to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in their Local Working Group Meetings and Conservation Security Program.
 - Provided staff support to NRCS employees when needed.
 - Coordination with other funding sources such as GWMA, NRCS, Department of Ecology (DOE) and the Othello Sandhill Crane Festival in various projects.
 - Some Staff and Supervisors attended the Washington Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting.
 - Held annual District elections in the Ephrata and Othello offices.
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Local Funding

- City of Othello Hotel/Motel 2% Tourism Tax Funding for the Othello Sandhill Crane Festival.
- Funding from the Columbia Basin Ground Water Management Area for the various projects to implement the GWMA Plan. Staff assists with Administrative duties in the Coordination of GWMA such as making maps, maintain financial records, monthly reports/vouchering, assist cooperators, maintain the website, assist with information/education needs and hold public water screenings.

- Additional grants for small farms and further IWM work have been submitted and are pending.

Burn Permits

- Ephrata office issued 115 Grant County Ag Burn Permits according to BMP guidelines established by DOE Ag Burn Task Force. Attended Task Force meetings and Rule Making meetings.
- Othello office issued 18 Adams County Ag Burn Permits, MOU with Adams CD.

Livestock/Dairy

- Continue to participate with the Livestock Task Force on developing recommendations and strategies related to the WA State AFO/CAFO regulations.
- 36 AFO/CAFO site visits on 8 feedlots.
- 1 tree planting wildlife habitat improvement project installed.
- 3 shelterbelt planning visits at 1 feedlot
- 33 nutrient management/storm water runoff technical assists on 8 feedlots.
- 157 DNMP follow-up visits on 31 existing dairies and 3 proposed dairies.
- 21 BMP structure and construction visits on 12 dairies, 1 concrete slab installed.
- 22 complaints calls responded to with follow-up.
- 4 dairy plan revisions completed.
- 10 dairy plans currently being revised with 58 site visits.
- 29 inspection site visits and follow-ups.
- 25 education/outreach/tours/workshops activities.
- 1 dairy plan certification, 1 new dairy plan approved.
- 16 general walk-in technical assistance.
- 170 phone technical assists to dairies, other agencies, AFO's and CAFO's.

Professional Engineering

- Signed an MOA with a South Central Engineer for engineering needs of livestock projects.

Community Collaboration & Coordination

- Coordinated the Eighth Annual Othello Sandhill Crane Festival, a local environmental festival attracting in excess of 1,500 participants and over 300 volunteers and over 30 Partners. This activity is in conjunction with approximately 30,000 Sandhill cranes migrating through the Othello area. GCD Supervisors provided guide service for visiting participants and a display showing Ag production in the Columbia Basin. District staff coordinates year-round the Sandhill Crane Festival and its business activities and maintains their website. Staff presented "Insects for Kids" at the Festival.

Marketing/Outreach & Education

- Funding from GWMA and Douglas County CD, Water on Wheels (WOW) program, GCD staff teaches K-12th graders about groundwater and best management practices through hands on demonstrations. To date in Grant County 3,921 students- 213 adults, Adams County 344 students- 16 adults, Lincoln County 629 students- 52 adults and South Douglas County 506 students- 38 adults have been taught. All lessons are aligned with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Standards.
- Held Regional Envirothon with 17 teams-84 students, 26 volunteers and 6 advisors.
- WSU Master Gardeners Shrub-steppe Demo project presentation with 26 in attendance.
- Arbor Day presentations to 9 schools in Moses Lake, Quincy and Ephrata with 1085 students taught and 1,200 trees handed out.



Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices.

